

Description

[BACKPACK WITH RETRACTABLE CONTROL]

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to a backpack, and more particularly a backpack with a walking restraint system for children being supervised by an adult.

[0002] When walking with a young child in a public place such as a grocery or department store, mall, amusement park or any other congested area, it is often difficult if not impossible to concentrate on anything but the child you are attending to. It is difficult to focus on the shopping because your attention is on the child. You are in constant fear of them wandering away, being abducted, getting lost or running off to investigate other area of the mall, store, or public facility. Just the thought of losing a child in a public place makes you afraid to let their hand go, even for a second. This makes shopping and visiting public places next to impossible, unless the child is properly restrained.

[0003] Parents in desperation have resorted to leash type devices to restrain small children, but they feel uncomfortable with having their children on restrained in such a way. Parents often are unable to decide where to attach the leash to the child. Should it attach to the arm or to the waist? Certainly not around the child's neck! They feel onlookers view them as less than human for using the restraint devices on the children especially if the device closely resembles a leash. Parents are torn between whether to restrain the child for their protection and peace of mind and suffer the stares of onlookers or choose to do nothing which could place both the parent and child in peril. Strollers and shopping carts work well for younger children, but as children get older, they are less willing to sit restrained in a these devices. They frequently attempt to get out of carts and strollers which often leads to injury, they fuss, cry and are simply annoyed by their inability to walk on their own.

[0004] U.S. Patent No. 4,666,017 issued to Donald Zimmerman on May 19, 1987 is a safety harness device having a waistband, a back piece, a pair of shoulder strap and a tether. Unlike the present invention, the tether is not retractable, nor does the safety harness device offer the

dual utility of a backpack with the retractable safety tether.

[0005] U.S. Patent No. 6,053,381 issued to Fahl et al April 25, 2000 for the retractable shoulder strap backpack has a retractable shoulder strap but unlike the present invention it does not have a retractable safety tether used for restraining or limiting the movement of small children.

[0006] U.S. Patent No. 4,925,070, issued to Tulgan on May 15, 1990 for the backpack including restraint means is a backpack suitable for use by a child. The backpack has a main part compartment for storing articles and a handle attached to cord means extending through a main wall of the main compartment. The handle can be secured to an outside surface of the main wall and can be removed by hand from the outside surface when it is desired to restrain the child by the cord means. The cord means is stored within the compartment or an additional sub compartment can be added for securing the handle when not in use. Unlike the present invention, Tulgan's device does not provide the parent with immediate accessibility to the restraint device. Also Tulgan's device calls for additional storage means, unlike the present invention the housing compartment is permanently inside the bottom of the

backpack. The Tulgan device cord means does not retract; it must be removed and stored in a compartment inside the backpack or on the outside surface.

[0007] U.S. Patent No. 5,768,041 issued to Rudolph on June 16, 1998 which permits the user of a backpack child carrier to quickly view rearward to the child in the backpack child carrier is distinguishable from the present invention. The Rudolph device is a clip-on reflective device, the utility ends once the child is too large to be carried in a backpack child carrier. The Rudolph retractable device does not provide a safety mechanism that securely attaches the parent and child, as does the present invention.

[0008] Numerous other patents of prior art include U.S. Patent No.'s 6,179,175 Bl; 4,809,896; 5,529,229; and 6,047,665 none of which allow for the dual function of a backpack and a retractable safety tether, as in the present invention. The present invention provides a secure attachment between the child and the parent/adult and allows for freedom of movement for the small child, in addition to a peace of mind for the parent.

[0009] Therefore, despite the attempts made by the prior art devices, there still exists a need for a backpack with a retractable safety tether with adjustable shoulder and waist

straps. None of the prior art patents, taken alone or in combination, suggests a design in like or kind to the present invention.

SUMMARY OF INVENTION

[0010] The present invention solves the problem of parents/ adults dilemma in ensuring the safety and control of small children in public places. The present invention combines the utility of a backpack and a retractable tether.

[0011] Backpacks are a favorite among children and adults. They are generally used for carrying items and allow for continued movement of the hands. Children are attracted to the idea of wearing backpacks, it allows them to carry their favorite personal belongings, plus it gives them the feeling of independence and maturity. Small children will delight in wearing the present invention; they will not resist this type of restraint.

[0012] The Backpack with retractable control has a compartment for carrying personal items, an adjustable shoulder with an adjustable securing mechanism and an adjustable waist strap that secures the backpack to the child. The present invention has a retractable tether that can be easily grabbed by the parent desiring to maintain control over a small child. The present invention has an identification

window sewn onto the front of the backpack for displaying crucial identification of the child.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

- [0013] Figure 1 is the outside front view of the backpack showing the retractable tether, identification window, adjustable shoulder and waist straps.
- [0014] Figure 2 is the detailed view of the retractable tether as it extends from the retracting mechanism, passes through the steel grommet from inside to outside of the back pack and it further shows the flat wrist loop.
- [0015] Figure 3 is an inside view of the backpack showing the identification window, retractable tether housing compartment, steel grommet, and tether retractor device attached to the bottom of the backpack.
- [0016] Figure 4 is the inside bottom view of the backpack showing the retracting mechanism, retractable tether, steel grommet, retracted tether in the housing compartment, and the retractable tether passing through the steel grommet.
- [0017] Fig. 5 shows the tip end of the retractable tether with the flat wrist loop.
- [0018] Fig. 6 shows the backpack, adjustable shoulder straps, adjusting buckles, securing mechanism, and the ad-

justable waist strap with a second securing mechanism.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0019] Turning to Fig. 1, a backpack (60) is shown. In Figure 1, an identification window (40) made of clear plastic for the display of a conventional identification card for the child and parent's names, address, phone numbers and any other identifying information. In Figure 1, the retractable tether (10) is shown retracted and the flat wrist loop (90) and the squeeze buckle (80). The retractable tether (10) extends approximately 5 feet and is made of braided cording. The steel grommet (20), an o-ring type device serves as a passage way for the retractable tether (10) to flow with ease from the inside retractable tether housing compartment, (Figure 4, 30) to the outside of the backpack for easy access for the parent.

[0020] Turning to Figure 2, an enhanced view of the steel grommet (20), showing the retractable tether (10), with the flat wrist loop (90) attached. The flat wrist loop (90) has many functions; it can be used to attach the retractable tether (10) to belt loops, brief cases, pocketbooks, baby strollers, shopping carts, and other device in the control of the parent. The flat wrist loop (90) can be easily slipped over the hand and onto the wrist of the parent. These fea-

tures allow the parent to maintain control of the young child and still have the use of both their hands. The flat wrist loop (90) can be adjusted by using the securing mechanism, preferably a squeeze buckle (80) so that the loop can be made to fit snugly around the parents wrist, or any of the aforementioned items. The squeeze buckle (80) has two parts, a male side and a female side, which are joined to secure the loop.

[0021] Figure 3 shows the inside view of the backpack (60) and the retractable tether housing compartment (30) which is the compartment that houses the retractable safety tether (10) when it is retracted. The retracting mechanism (70) is the mechanism that retracts the retractable tether (10) when it is not in use. The identification card window slot (45) inside view is shown.

[0022] Turning to Figure 4, the bottom inside view of the backpack is shown. In Figure 4, the retractable tether housing compartment (30) is shown with the retractable tether (10) passing through the steel grommet (20). In Figure 4, the retracting mechanism (70) controls the length of the extension of the retractable tether (10), which allows for control of the retractable tether (10) by the parent.

[0023] Turning to Figure 5, an enhanced view of the controlling

end of the retractable tether (10) is shown. The flat wrist loop (90) allows the retractable tether (10) to be attached to strollers, belt loops, pocket books, briefcases or other devices in the control of the parent. The wristband loop (90) can alternatively be used by slipping it over the hand and onto the wrist of the parent.

[0024] Figure 6 is the outside back view of the backpack (60). The adjustable shoulder straps (110) adjust at the bottom of each strap by using the adjustable buckles (120). Using the adjustable shoulder straps (110) and adjustable buckles (120) allows the backpack (60) to fit securely and tighter to the child. The shoulder straps (110) are adjustable to adjust to the appropriate size of the child. The first securing mechanism (130) allows the parent to secure the backpack (60) so that the child cannot remove the backpack (60). The adjustable waist strap (140) wraps around the waist of the child to secure the backpack (60). The second securing mechanism (150) has a dual function, it secures the backpack (60) to Turning to Figure 2, an enhanced view of the steel grommet (20), showing the retractable tether (10), with the flat wrist loop (90) attached. The flat wrist loop (90) has many functions; it can be used to attach the retractable tether (10) to belt loops,

brief cases, pocketbooks, baby strollers, shopping carts, and other device in the control of the parent. The flat wrist loop (90) can be easily slipped over the hand and onto the wrist of the parent. These features allow the parent to maintain control of the young child and still have the use of both their hands. The flat wrist loop (90) can be adjusted by using the securing mechanism, preferably a squeeze buckle (80) so that the loop can be made to fit snugly around the parents wrist, or any of the aforementioned items. The squeeze buckle (80) has two parts, a male side and a female side, which are joined to secure the loop. the child and it provides a quick release method for removing the backpack (60) from the child. The second securing mechanism (140) can be placed on the waist strap (140) allowing the parent to secure the child, yet not allowing the child access to the second securing mechanism (150) to remove the adjustable waist strap (140).